

XLVI.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

[Continued from p. 474.]

91. *Australian Museum Report.*

[Report of the Trustees of the Australian Museum, New South Wales, for the year 1895.]

By the forty-second Annual Report of the Trustees of the Australian Museum, Sydney, of which Mr. R. Etheridge, jun., is now Curator, we learn that the progress of this great institution has been satisfactory, though somewhat hampered by want of funds. Mr. North's account of his year's work in the Class of Birds will be read with interest by ornithologists. The "group-collection," which is intended to illustrate the life-histories of Australian birds, has been augmented by 16 cases, and now represents 61 species.

92. *Chapman (Abel) on Northern Birds.*

[Wild Norway: with Chapters on Spitsbergen, Denmark, etc. By Abel Chapman. Illustrated by the Author, assisted by Chas. Whymper and P. Ch. French. London: Edward Arnold, 1897.]

In this inspiring book the author gives the results of his experiences in Northern Europe during sixteen years. Even if we put aside, from our point of view, the accounts of sport with elk and reindeer, grouse and ptarmigan, salmon and trout, there remains plenty to interest the reader of exclusively ornithological tastes, while a general idea of Scandinavia and the distribution of its fauna is conveyed with remarkable vividness. The sub-chapters on 'The Avifauna of Norway,' Bird-life in the Sürendal, Bird-notes in the Förde Valley, as well as Specific Notes on Grouse and Ptarmigan, may be specially indicated; while Chapter xviii. contains a very complete summary of Scandinavian birds, their distribution, &c. Two chapters are devoted to Denmark, on which an excellent paper was contributed to our pages (*Ibis*, 1894, pp. 339-351) by the author's much-regretted brother, the late Alfred C. Chapman; there are notes on Bird- and Insect-migration observed on twenty-

four crossings of the North Sea; and numbers of spirited vignettes of birds, from the author's pencil, are scattered through the book. Lastly, we owe to Mr. Chapman the extracts from the Journal of Mr. Arnold Pike, who remained in Spitsbergen from August 21st, 1888, to June 8th, 1889. Snowy Owls were seen there on October 5th and 14th, and for the last time on November 2nd, until spring. Mandt's Guillemots were seen, and Eiders and Brünnich's Guillemots were heard, as early as January 11th; Fulmars made their appearance by February 20th; the first Ivory Gull on March 15th; on March 23rd the Snowy Owl had begun to prey on "ryper" (*Lagopus hemileucurus*); while Glaucous Gulls came on the 26th, and Little Auks on the 28th of March. A Sanderling (*Calidris arenaria*) was shot on Amsterdam Island on August 21st, 1888, and Mr. Chapman has the skin [*suprà* p. 591].

93. *Finn on the Cotton-Teal* (*Nettapus*).

[Note on the Gait of the Cotton-Teal, with exhibition of living specimens. By F. Finn, B.A., F.Z.S. Proc. A. S. Beng., April 1897.]

The writer undoubtedly shows that, contrary to what prior authorities have stated, Cotton-Teal can walk, but it cannot be said that they walk so freely as many other of the Anatidæ. Mr. Finn has kindly sent some living specimens of *Nettapus coromandelianus* to the Zoological Society's Gardens, so those who are interested in the question can judge for themselves.

94. *Flower on Natural History as a Vocation*.

[Natural History as a Vocation. By Sir William H. Flower, K.C.B., F.R.S. Chambers's Journ. xiv. p. 225, 1897.]

Sir William Flower's short article on the question of taking up Natural History as a "vocation" will, we are sure, be read with profit by everyone who has to consider this important subject. As the "regular occupation of one who has no other means of living," Natural History is, as Sir William puts it, about the worst paid profession in the world. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that matters

are steadily improving, and that the "collecting-instinct" which is so largely developed in some boys should on no account be suppressed. More excellent advice on the subject than that contained in the present address could not possibly be put together in a few words.

95. *Fulcher on British Birds.*

[Birds of Our Islands. By F. A. Fulcher. London: Andrew Melrose. 8vo.]

As this book has been sent to us, we notice it, but we do so with regret, for it contains more errors than are usual even in "popular" works. Some of the illustrations by Nops are good, but they are wrongly named: the bird called "White-tailed Eagle" (p. 236) is a Golden Eagle, and the "Merlin and its Prey" (p. 240) represents a Peregrine on a Mallard. The Merlin has been credited with many wonderful feats, but this excels them all. So far as the author's experience goes, the letterpress is tolerable, but there is much compilation and not good of its kind.

96-99. *Hartert's recent Contributions to Ornithology.*

[96. On some Necessary and some Desirable Changes of Names lately used in connection with Philippine Birds. *Novitates Zoologicae*, iv. p. 11, 1897.

97. Notes on Palæarctic Birds and Allied Forms. *Op. cit.* p. 131.

98. Mr. William Doherty's Bird-collections from Celebes. *Op. cit.* p. 153.

99. Descriptions of seven new Species of Birds and one new Subspecies from Flores, and of one new Subspecies from Djampea, all collected by Mr. William Everett. *Op. cit.* p. 170.]

In No. 96 Mr. Hartert points out that *Cinnyris excellens*, Grant = *Æthopyga flagrans*, Oust.; that *Artamides mindanensis*, Steere = *Graucalus kochi*, Kutter; and makes further remarks on the synonymy and status of five species of Philippine birds.

In No. 97 Mr. Hartert treats of the birds of the genera *Nucifraga*, *Certhia*, *Ammodramus*, and *Galerida*. In *Nucifraga* he now recognizes 4 subspecies of *N. caryocatactes*—

namely, *N. c. caryocatactes*, *N. c. relictæ*, *N. c. macro-rhynchos*, and *N. c. japonicus*, the last being a new subspecies from N. Japan and the Kuriles. The genus *Certhia* is, as Mr. Hartert truly says, a "much-hunted ground." Here, however, our friend again adds a new subspecies—*C. familiaris japonica*, and recognizes 7 species; one of these divided into 10 and another into 2 subspecies! Our familiar British species is to be *C. f. britannica* [sic], but we cannot bring ourselves to spell Britain with two t's, because the original author of the name did not spell it correctly. As regards the two genera of Larks (more hunted than even *Certhia*) we will ask those interested in these difficult birds to read our author's notes and consult his tables—observing merely that in the latter genus he makes three new names: *Galerida cristata delta* (from Lower Egypt); *G. cristata superflua* (from Tunis) = *G. pallida*, Whitaker; and *G. ellioti* (from Somaliland) = *G. pallida*, Elliot.

No. 98. After visiting Java, Bali, Lombok, Sambawa, and Sumba, Mr. Doherty proceeded to Celebes, and made a short expedition up Bonthain Peak, where about half his collection was made at a height of 5000 feet. He then collected in the low country north of Macassar in July 1896, and passed the two following months near Palvo Bay, in West Celebes. Mr. Hartert gives us separate lists of the birds obtained in these three localities. On Bonthain Peak examples of 46 species were procured, and in commenting on these Mr. Hartert introduces two new subspecies: *Cinnyris frenata meyeri* (from North Celebes), and *C. f. salayerensis* from the Salayer Islands.

The 50 skins collected in the low country north of Macassar are mostly referable to well-known species, but Mr. Hartert mentions 12 as of interest, among which are specimens of *Siphia rufigula*, *Monachalcyon capucinus*, and *Phlogænas bimaculata*. The birds collected near Palos Bay are referred to 65 species, amongst which *Munia subcastanea*, *Monachalcyon monachus intermedius*, and *Cacutua sulphurea djampeana* are described as new.

In No. 99 Mr. Hartert describes the following 7 new

species from specimens obtained by Mr. A. Everett in Southern Flores: *Brachypteryx floris*, *Orthnocichla everetti*, *Micræca oscillans*, *Pachycephala nudigula*, *Lophozosterops subcristatus*, *Zosterops crassirostris*, and *Z. superciliaris*; also a new subspecies—*Cryptolopha montis floris*. A new subspecies of *Trochoglossus forsteni* from Djampea is named *T. f. djampeanus*.

100. *Helms on Birds met with in the North Atlantic.*

[Ornithologiske Jagttagelser fra det nordlige Atlanterhav. Af O. Helms. Vidensk. Meddel. fra d. naturh. Foren. i Kbhvn. 1897, p. 216.]

Having made several voyages between Denmark and Greenland, and thus naturally become interested in the birds observed and obtained during his passages across the North Atlantic, Mr. Helms has prepared the present memoir on the subject. The birds met with on the ocean fall naturally into two divisions:—Land-birds that are stragglers or migrants, and pelagic birds. After some preliminary remarks, Mr. Helms treats of both of these classes in systematic order. The Passeres of his list are 8 in number, 6 of which are European and 2 American. Altogether he enumerates about 30 species as having been noted or met with by different observers.

101. *Johnston on the Birds of British Central Africa.*

[British Central Africa: an attempt to give some Account of a Portion of the Territories under British influence north of the Zambesi. By Sir Harry H. Johnston, K.C.B. &c. 1 vol. 544 pp. London: Methuen, 1897.]

Sir Harry Johnston's well-written and beautifully-illustrated volume on the new British Territory, of which he has been the first and very successful Governor, should be studied by all those who are interested in the modern development of Africa. Here, at least, there can be no question that a few short years of good administration have enabled an energetic ruler to bring order out of chaos. But what we are specially interested in is his chapter on the birds of British Central Africa.

As is well known to readers of 'The Ibis,' Sir Harry Johnston, when selecting officers for his new government, considered that his staff would not be complete without a representative of science, and took out with him for this post Mr. Alexander Whyte, F.Z.S. Under Sir Harry's directions Mr. Whyte made large collections in every branch of Natural History, and in particular sent home numerous series of birds, which have been described by Capt. Shelley in this Journal. Sir Harry Johnston now gives a complete list of these birds, nearly according to Capt. Shelley's arrangement, and prefaces it with a valuable article, based chiefly on his own observations, on the most noticeable features of the Central-African Ornithology. We subjoin Sir Harry's notes on a Bee-eater, which he rightly characterizes as "almost the most gorgeously coloured of living birds":—

"Notable amongst the Bee-eaters is the lovely *Merops natalensis*, which is abundant on the river Shiré and probably in other low-lying parts of British Central Africa. At Chiromo this bird is present in large numbers, as it nests in holes in the high clay-bank on the spot which divides the river Ruo from the Shiré. When I arrived at Chiromo in 1891 to commence the administration of this country I found that these beautiful birds were being shot down in numbers to be skinned and sent home for the decoration of hats. I consequently took them under Government protection; since that time their numbers have greatly increased, and they have become wonderfully tame. It is objected, however, to this favour shown to them that, burrowing into the bank to make holes for the reception of their eggs, they assist the water in flood-time to eat away the clay and so gradually diminish the site of Chiromo. I do not think there is any fear that the Bee-eaters may cause more than the loss of a few feet of clay-cliffs, and the ground they are thus destroying is a piece of Government land which is retained as a kind of a park. When these Bee-eaters settle on the branches of a bare leafless bush, which they are very fond of doing, the first impression on the passing traveller is that this shrub is covered with gorgeous blue and crimson flowers, till, when

he is advancing to gather them, the flowers change into birds which fly away and leave the bareness of the bush singularly apparent."

102. *Kuschel on the Parasitic Habits of Cassidix.*

[Ueber die Fortpflanzung von *Cassidix oryzivora*, Scl. Von M. Kuschel. J. f. O. 1897, p. 168.]

This is an interesting paper, confirming what we have already published in this Journal (see *Ibis*, 1896, p. 585, and *suprà*, p. 143) as to the parasitic habits of *Cassidix oryzivora*. But we believe that Dr. Goeldi was the original discoverer of the curious fact now confirmed by Herr Schulz's observations.

103. *Lee's Photographs of British Birds.*

[Among British Birds in their Nesting-Haunts, illustrated by the Camera. By Oswin A. J. Lee. Pts. III.-V. 4to. Edinburgh: Douglas. 1897.]

In these further instalments of this admirable work (*cf.* *Ibis*, *suprà*, p. 276) the nests represented are those of the following species:—Part III. *Acredula caudata* (2), *Larus ridibundus*, *Podiceps fluviatilis* (2), *Charadrius pluvialis*, *Vanellus vulgaris* (2), *Larus argentatus*, *Totanus canescens*. Part IV. *Scolopax rusticula*, *Hæmatopus ostralegus* (2), *Anthus trivialis*, *Emberiza schæniclus*, *Ægialitis hiaticula*, *Sterna minuta* (2), *Corvus monedula*. Part V. *Crex pratensis*, *Fringilla cælebs*, *Tetrao urogallus* (2), *Gallinago cælestis*, *Cygnus olor* (2), *Regulus cristatus*, *Totanus hypoleucus* (2). While the standard of excellence is fully maintained in the photographs and the letterpress, there are also some very characteristic vignettes from pen-and-ink sketches. By the way, we should like to know Mr. Lee's authority for his statement respecting the Tree-Pipit in Ireland.

104. *Le Souëf's Expedition to Mount Peter Botte.*

[Ascent of Mt. Peter Botte, North Queensland. By D. Le Souëf. Victorian Naturalist, March-April, 1897.]

Like others of Mr. Le Souëf's interesting narratives, the

journal of his expedition to Mount "Peter Botte" (which lies about fifty miles south of the port of Cooktown in Northern Queensland) will be found full of allusions to birds and their habits. Mr. Le Souëf went by steamer from Melbourne to Cooktown, and thence by road to Wyalla, a station on the Bloomfield river. Hence the start was made for "Peter Botte" with a party of natives to carry the baggage over a very rough route. A view is given, taken from a photograph, of the summit of this very singularly-shaped mountain, so named from its supposed resemblance to its prototype in Mauritius. The party mounted the ridge to the height of 2400 feet and met with many rare birds—*Ælurædus maculosus*, *Cracticus quoyi*, *Prionodura newtoniana*, &c.,—in the vicinity, and managed to get to the top of the smaller mountain, whence a splendid view was obtained of the "large solid bell-shaped mass of grey granite" that constituted the larger and inaccessible summit of Mount "Peter Botte."

On their return they saw and heard an example of the rare Tooth-billed Bower-bird (*Scenopæus dentirostris*), and shortly afterwards came on its playground. "It cannot be called a bower, as the bird merely scratches the dead leaves and rubbish off a piece of ground measuring about 3 feet by 2, and places on it a few green leaves, with their upper surfaces on the ground and their backs exposed to view, which, of course, made them more conspicuous, being of a lighter colour. They were not placed in any regular order, any more than being the same distance apart, namely, about 4 inches, and the number of leaves varied in the different playgrounds from eight and upwards." Mr. Le Souëf examined over a dozen different grounds, and did not find any trace of berries, shells, or other objects, but simply the green leaves, which were always fresh, and seemed as if they were picked daily.

105. *Masefield on Wild-Bird Protection and Nesting-Boxes.*

[Wild Bird Protection and Nesting-Boxes. By John R. B. Masefield, M.A. Leeds, 1897. 1 vol. 12mo. 130 pp.]

In putting together in this little volume an intelligible

account of the various Wild Birds' Protection Acts that have been passed by our Legislature, and in collecting the Orders made by authority in the different Counties of England, Mr. Masefield has done a good work for his feathered favourites and for persons who sympathize with his views. The portion of Mr. Masefield's volume devoted to the description and illustration of nesting-boxes is likewise of great value. Nesting-boxes are an easy and delightful method of attracting a number of familiar and interesting species to breed in our gardens and even upon our houses. Mr. Masefield gives us a list of between 30 and 40 species that he has thus induced to breed within the precincts of his gardens, shrubberies, and buildings, and we believe that the list might be easily extended. We heartily commend this useful manual to all who are desirous of encouraging and observing birds.

106. *Merriam on Species and Subspecies.*

[Suggestions for a new Method of Discriminating between Species and Subspecies. By C. Hart Merriam. 'Science,' n. s. v. p. 753, 1897.]

The ordinary rule among the American naturalists has been to treat "forms that intergrade, no matter how different, as subspecies," and "forms that do not intergrade, no matter how closely related, as species." It must, however, be confessed that this rule has not been closely adhered to in practice. Dr. Merriam, discussing the question in 'Science,' has now come to a different conclusion, and states that in his judgment "forms which differ only slightly should rank as subspecies, even if not known to intergrade, while forms which differ in definite, constant, and easily recognized characters should rank as species even if known to intergrade." This, we think, is a common-sense view of the question.

107. *Meyer and Wigglesworth on Birds from Celebes.*

[Bericht über die 5-7 Vogelsammlung der Herren Dr. P. und Dr. F. Sarasin aus Celebes. Von A. B. Meyer und L. W. Wigglesworth. Abhandl. u. Ber. k. zool.-anthrop. Mus. Dresden, 1896-97, No. 1.]

The authors write on three new sets of birds recently

transmitted by the brothers Sarasin from Central and Southern Celebes, and the adjoining island of Bonerate between Celebes and Flores. Five new species (or subspecies) are described—*Cryptolopha sarasinorum*, *Pachycephala bonthaina*, *Melilestes celebensis meridionalis*, and *Zosterops anomala* from South Celebes, and *Oriolus boneratensis* from Bonerate. Five other species are new to the Celebean avifauna. Altogether the Drs. Sarasin have transmitted examples of 202 species from Celebes.

108. *Richmond on Birds from Madagascar.*

[Catalogue of a Collection of Birds made by Dr. W. L. Abbott in Madagascar, with Descriptions of three New Species. By Charles W. Richmond. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus. xix. p. 677, 1897.]

Mr. Richmond describes the collection of 217 specimens of birds made by Dr. Abbott from February to July 1895 in Madagascar, mainly on the east coast, and refers them to 83 species. Of these three are new to science—*Thalassornis insularis*, *Ægialitis thoracica*, and *Copsychus inexpectatus*. *Ægialitis thoracica* has been already described (*cf.* Ibis, 1896, p. 578); the two others are now characterized.

109. *Ridgway on the Birds of the Galápagos.*

[Birds of the Galápagos Archipelago. By Robert Ridgway. Pr. U. S. Nat. Mus. xix. pp. 459-670, 1896.]

The importance of the study of the Fauna of the Galápagos has been recognized ever since Darwin brought to our notice the phenomena which it exhibits. The last account of the remarkable avifauna of the group was that published by Mr. Salvin in 1876 (Trans. Zool. Soc. vol. ix. p. 417). Mr. Ridgway now gives us a new version complete up to the present time, with the worthy object of "collating the knowledge thus far secured and of facilitating further investigations." For, as he says, it is quite certain that there is much more to be done before the bird-life of the Galápagos can be deemed so well known as to "warrant any serious attempt to solve the problems to which Darwin first called attention."

Mr. Ridgway's revised list shows us that 105 species are now known to be included in the Galápagan avifauna. These he refers to 46 genera, of which five (*Nesomimus*, *Certhidea*, *Geospiza*, *Camarhynchus*, and *Nesopelia*) are peculiar to the group. The first four of these, besides some others, are represented in many of the islands by peculiar species. Mr. Ridgway treats of all the Galápagan species one after another in a most elaborate manner, stating their specific characters, synonyms, and distribution, and adding a list of the specimens contained in the rich collection of the National Museum at Washington. Moreover, the ranges of the species are clearly shown in a series of outline maps, and a bibliography is added of previous authorities on the subject. A more carefully prepared and more complete memoir on one of the most interesting subjects in ornithology it has seldom been our pleasant task to notice.

110. Rothschild on *Guldenstädt's Redstart*.

[On Differences between *Guldenstädt's Redstart* and its Eastern Ally. By the Hon. Walter Rothschild. *Novitates Zoologicæ*, iv. p. 167, 1897.]

Mr. Rothschild points out the differences between the true *Guldenstädt's Redstart* of the Caucasus (*Ruticilla erythrogastra*) and the allied species of the Himalayas and Eastern Asia, which should be called *Ruticilla grandis*, Gould.

111. Rothschild on a new *Hill-Wren*.

[Description of a new *Hill-Wren* from Flores. By the Hon. Walter Rothschild. *Novitates Zoologicæ*, iv. p. 168, 1897.]

Pnoepyga everetti is a new species from South Flores, of which examples were obtained by Mr. Everett at elevations of from 3000 to 3580 feet. Its nearest ally is *P. rufa*, Sharpe, from Java.

112. Salvadori on *Birds from Tigre, Abyssinia*.

[Lista di Uccelli raccolti dal Dr. Muzioli nel Tigrè e donati al Museo Zoologico di Perugia; con Note di Tommaso Salvadori. *Boll. Mus. Zool. ed Anat. comp. R. Univ. Torino*, xii. no. 287, 1897.]

Count Salvadori has worked out a small collection of birds

made in the Abyssinian province of Tigre by Dr. Muzioli and presented to the Muscum of Perugia. He refers them to 98 species, and gives remarks on ten of them which require special notice. Of these *Estrilda ochrogaster* (!) is a new species allied to *E. paludicola* and *E. roseicrissa*.

113. *Saville-Kent's 'Naturalist in Australia.'*

[The Naturalist in Australia. By W. Saville-Kent, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c. Illustrated by 50 full-page Collotypes, 9 Coloured Plates by Keulemans and other Artists, and over one hundred Illustrations in the Text. Folio. London: Chapman & Hall, 1897.]

Mr. Saville-Kent's beautifully illustrated work, which is replete with information about nature in Australia, contains a special chapter on its birds, accompanied by a chromolithographic plate containing coloured figures (drawn by Keulemans) of the beautiful Finches *Poephila mirabilis* and *P. gouldi*. There are also good illustrations of some captive "More-porks" (*Podargus*), but it is asserted that the bird that cries for "more pork" in the Australian "bush" is not really a *Podargus* (as has been generally believed) but an Owl, *Ninox boobook*.

Among other places of interest Mr. Saville-Kent visited Houtmann's Abrolhos—a group of islands situated off the coast of Western Australia, and celebrated for sea-birds, guano, and corals. Of the sea-birds found there Mr. Saville-Kent reprints the list prepared by Mr. J. A. Campbell, the ornithologist of Victoria, and published in the second volume of the Reports of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science (1890). Thirty-two species are enumerated. Those who wish to get some general idea of the chief wonders of the Australian fauna and flora will do well to refer to this work.

114. *Suchetet on Hybrids among Wild Birds.*

[Les Hybrides à l'état sauvage. Règne Animal. Tome Premier. Classe des Oiseaux. Par André Suchetet. Paris: Baillière, 1897. 1 vol. 8vo. 1002 pp.]

In this thick volume our great authority on hybridism in birds has united six articles which he has previously published on the subject* and has formed them into a homogeneous

* See our notices, 'Ibis,' 1893, 1894, and 1896.

whole. A preface of 152 pages contains a general discussion of the whole question, and concludes with a list of the many friends and correspondents who have favoured the author with advice and with the loan of specimens. An alphabetical index of memoirs and articles relating to hybridism in birds is given at the end of the work, and a large number of new additions to the knowledge of the subject which have occurred during the progress of the work are given in an Appendix. M. Suchetet's volume is indispensable to all interested in the question of hybridism in birds, and makes an excellent basis for future investigations.

115. *Winge on Birds of the Danish Lighthouses*, 1896.

[Fuglene ved de danske Fyr i 1896. 14de Aarsberetning om danske Fugle. Ved Herluf Winge. Vid. Meddel. fra d. naturh. i Kbh. 1897, p. 237.]

Mr. Winge's annual report on the birds met with at the Danish Lighthouses has appeared with its usual exactness and regularity*. In 1896 the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen received from 35 of the Lighthouses 1018 birds, which were referred on examination to 65 species. Of these, four (*Falco tinnunculus*, *Surnia funerea*, *Phylloscopus superciliosus*, and *Daulias philomela*) were new to the Lighthouse list. We notice that the three species which occurred in the greatest numbers were *Erithacus rubecula* (212 specimens), *Alauda arvensis* (197), and *Turdus musicus* (185).

XLVII.—Obituary.

CHARLES BYGRAVE WHARTON, whose death we mentioned in our last number, was the second son of the late Rev. H. J. Wharton, Vicar of Mitcham, Surrey, and elder brother of the late H. T. Wharton (see 'Ibis,' 1896, p. 159). In early life he took an active interest in bird-life, and during a residence in New Zealand, where he took part in the campaign against the Maoris in 1868, he made, though he never published, many notes on ornithology. From September 1874 to May 1875 he lived in Corsica, and on his

* For last notice, see 'Ibis,' 1897, p. 137.—EDD.